

Date: 24 July 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Members, Committee for Language Development

SUBJECT : Revision of Language Development Program

REFERENCES : A. Memorandum from DDCI for DD/S, DD/P, DD/I, and IG, dated 25 March 1961: "Inspector General's Survey of the CIA Training Program"
B. CIA Regulation No. [REDACTED] revised 5 May 1960: "Language Development Program"
C. Headquarters Regulation [REDACTED] revised 1 April 1961; "Language Development Program" (new format of [REDACTED])
D. [REDACTED]

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1. PROBLEM

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a. Per reference A, above, the DDCI has directed that certain amendments be made in Agency [REDACTED] regulations governing foreign language training policies and procedures.

b. The Agency's Language Development Program, references B and C, above, was last revised substantively on 5 May 1960, and during the past year our experience with it has indicated that certain other changes need also to be considered at this time.

c. The immediate problem is to incorporate the IG recommendations as approved by DDCI and to review our experience of the past year to identify other changes which are necessary in the present regulation. In addition, the objectives of the program should be reexamined to determine what changes should be included which will be put into effect at later dates.

2. ASSUMPTIONS

a. The Congress has discouraged the Department of State from implementing its proposed language incentive awards program. Other features of the language development effort at State, however, have met with approval and are being carried out energetically. These

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measures are similar to some recommendations embodied in the IG Report. It is assumed that the Agency will take note of these attitudes and experiences, but will wish to continue judicious employment of monetary incentives to language learning as long as such incentives are deemed necessary.

3. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

a. The Agency Language Development Program (hereafter the "Program") was initiated in February 1957, revised in December 1958, and again in May 1960. The present Program is prescribed in references B and C. The cost of language training and development to CIA exceeds \$600,000 per year, and of this amount nearly \$218,000 is expended for Language Awards.

b. In his Inspector General's Survey of the CIA Training Program, August 1960, the Inspector General included a survey of Agency language training policies and practices and noted certain deficiencies and recommended a number of improvements. Some of these recommendations affected DD/P specifically, others the Agency as a whole. These recommendations are presented as TAB 1 to this study. (DD/P action pursuant to the recommendations affecting that Component only is reflected [redacted] reference D, above.)

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c. Experience over the past year with [redacted] has brought to light other, lesser deficiencies in the present Program. Briefly, these are as follows:

(1) Questions have been raised as to the necessity for testing personnel who have claimed a language proficiency in the past per Form 444c, Language Data Record, but who no longer wish to claim--or be tested for--language proficiency. [See [redacted] This question has been answered in several ways, including

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(a) permitting the employee to withdraw his claim, and thus "cleaning up the record of delinquent or unsubstantiated claims," and

(b) continuing the record of the claim for proficiency, but indicating that this claim is not backed up by a current Agency language proficiency test.

(2) The status of Form 444c itself requires clarification. It is no longer used as a basis for a claim of language competence, but those already completed (a) are used to establish anniversary dates for awards purposes [See [redacted] and (b) do provide a past record of individual language proficiency. They complement more current inventories developed from test results as well as from rosters of the Agency's professional linguists--

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interpreters, translators, radio monitors, and language instructors [REDACTED]

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(3) Off-duty time language training "undertaken at the request of a sponsoring component, without overtime compensation..." poses a legal question which may require further review by the General Counsel. [REDACTED]

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(4) Paragraph [REDACTED] has been invalidated by discontinuance of the CIA Career Staff concept.

(5) The present system and schedule of incentive language awards has proved to be not sufficiently flexible to meet satisfactorily and fairly the differing language needs of the three Deputy Directorates. The administration and granting of language awards, involving actions by the Office of Training (OTR), operating officials and career boards and panels, have revealed an understandable lack of uniformity as to interpretation of the present system and its intent. The "maintenance award" is especially susceptible to confusion and question.

(6) Finally, the question has been raised as to the propriety and necessity for having a language awards system, particularly when (a) the language training is sponsored and paid for by the Agency, and (b) when language proficiency shall be made a prerequisite for assignment to specified positions, as recommended by the Inspector General.

4. DISCUSSION

a. The incorporation of the IG recommendations in the proposed revised regulation and the inclusion of other administrative clarifications which have shown themselves to be necessary is a job which can be done quite quickly, because there is very little room for disagreement on most of these points.

b. By far the most difficult task involved in the revision of the regulation is that of deciding the future course of the Program and implementing future changes. The Program has, to date, undergone two major phases of development: Phase I, February 1957 - May 1960, and Phase II, May 1960 to the present. A brief review of these phases will serve to characterize the trend of the Program.

Phase I

This period was one of experimentation and information-gathering. It encouraged the widest possible participation in foreign language learning at all levels and was aimed at the creation of a pool or broad base of Agency foreign language competence in as many languages as possible. The greater emphasis was placed on

voluntary efforts in acquiring language proficiency. More emphasis was laid on publicizing the need for language study and on getting it under way than on directing it toward specific goals.

Naturally the results were mixed. We gained experience in language training, testing, and administration of awards. Agency-wide interest in language study was stimulated. That there were quantitative gains in the Agency's inventory of languages is undeniable. On the other hand, the hoped-for broad scale, tested inventory of foreign language proficiencies did not materialize. It became apparent, too, that many participants had little likelihood of using their new or increased proficiency for the Agency's benefit. It also appeared that gains in uncommon languages and in the upper levels of proficiency were small. It also became obvious that we were overloading facilities for training with marginal trainees in a time of shrinking budgets and tight personnel ceilings. Thus we had to concentrate our efforts on those who needed or who would need useful levels of competence in order to "discharge the responsibilities of the Agency."

Phase II

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Hence, the 5 May 1960 revision of [REDACTED] reflected a shift in emphasis "from a generalized interest in language study to a greater concern for the utility of the languages studied." (Quoted from INFORMATION SHEET to [REDACTED] 5 May 1960.) This shift was accomplished in part directly by assigning the responsibility for certification of language awards to Career Boards and Panels. The effect of this provision has been somewhat attenuated due to the necessity of "keeping faith" with those who had already begun programs of study. However, continued gains can be expected from the inevitable increase in management control which will result as our objectives become clearer.

During the early part of this phase VIATP elementary training in four world languages was discontinued but was resumed in March 1961 on a more discriminate basis with the cooperation of sponsors. We can be reasonably sure that those now entering VIATP elementary training have a foreseeable need for proficiency in the language they are studying.

There has been a concerted drive during this phase to complete required proficiency testing of those who had claimed any degree of proficiency.

Also during this phase a new tutorial language training program was introduced in order to meet the special needs of DD/P. There has been a tendency to overuse this facility rather than make full use of regularly scheduled courses. This situation is being corrected by DD/P and OTR action, as recommended by the IG.

Overall gains during this period have been continuing, if not spectacular, and there is a growing demand for training in the less common languages. At the same time, the Language and Area School of the Office of Training has suffered some key personnel losses and in general is finding it difficult to locate and employ suitable, qualified language teachers and language teaching supervisors who have had linguistics training. Attention is being devoted to this problem. In addition, the LAS has been investigating and experimenting with the use of programmed instruction and members of the faculty have attended Instructor Training Workshops conducted by the OTR Educational Specialist.

As noted in an earlier paragraph, there have been a number of hitches and delays in the full implementation of the 5 May 1960 Program. These are due in part to inadequate definitions, in part to differences in interpretation, and in part to deficiencies in forward planning. The Inspector General's recommendations are directed at the last.

In all of this history there is a clearly discernible trend. The Language Development Program has become increasingly preoccupied with the management of language development in the Agency and the language awards program has gradually been reduced to a tool for promoting compliance with the goals of management. We wish to contend that foreign language training is but one of the several broad areas of professional training required by personnel of this Agency. The awards program was made necessary by a serious deficiency in foreign language competence. A special incentive is justifiable only so long as there is a serious deficiency to be corrected. It seems reasonable to assume that every gain in the direction of a well-planned and managed program of language development will decrease the necessity for awards correspondingly.

Many of the minor administrative and bureaucratic stumbling blocks have been ironed out, and working rules and procedures have been agreed upon. After some initial delays and confusion, the several career boards and panels are effectively meeting their responsibilities with respect to the language incentive awards. Several components have made very real progress toward setting language training objectives.

There is still a need, however, for longer-range estimates of language training requirements and for timely transmittal of these requirements to the Language and Area School, Office of Training (IAS/TR). By requirements we mean here a coordinated statement of intention to train specified numbers of individuals at certain approximate times and at specified levels of instruction, with specified goals. It reflects a management decision to meet previously set language objectives on the assumption that the normal method of training is in organized classes. This does not imply the abandonment of flexibility; it makes possible additional flexibility in meeting training requirements without the sacrifice of efficiency and economy. Tutorials will still be necessary and there must still remain an additional "spot requirement" system to meet genuine contingency situations. Systematic training to meet our objectives, however, can cut down on the number of contingency situations which we will meet in the future.

The picture, then, is one of gradual progress in most respects, although a very close and detailed examination of our foreign language inventory might continue to show some serious lacks. These come to light especially when we need suddenly to man a contingency task force or to staff a field station in a newly critical area. There are still, for example, not enough operational personnel who have a useful comprehensive proficiency in Spanish, French or Portuguese! Nevertheless, although we have not taken "a great leap forward," there is a discernible, favorable trend toward

- (1) broader recognition of the need and utility of foreign language proficiency and its acceptance as an essential professional qualification;
- (2) clearer definition of language objectives and requirements;
- (3) a managed or planned language training effort;
- (4) clarification and understanding of administrative "SOP's" related to the implementation of the Program;
- (5) full recognition of the need constantly to improve language training methods and techniques as well as the competence of instructional personnel;
- (6) acceptance of the need for cooperative, coordinated advance planning in order to develop the necessary training capability, either internal or through outside arrangements.

c. Program guidelines, planning and implementation. A good many things can be done to improve program management and administration, and most have already been identified. They include

- (1) Complete and maintain on a current (planned) basis the identification of categories of personnel, positions, or proportions of positions for which specified language proficiencies are required.
- (2) Make language proficiency tests mandatory (they already are) and enforce this aspect of the regulations.
- (3) Expand the "language inventory" in order to record current (tested) proficiencies, past (untested) proficiencies, and competences of the Agency's professional linguists.
- (4) Write into the Program the need for advanced planning and programing of language training and for timely communication of requirements to the Office of Training.
- (5) Clarify the legal question posed by Agency-directed or sponsored off-duty training without overtime compensation.
- (6) Sharpen the definitions or criteria for sponsorship of directed, voluntary, and tutorial training.

d. Do we still need language awards? In our opinion, the answer must be "Yes." We suggest that we should continue to employ some system of monetary incentive language awards

- (1) for the immediate future--in order to keep faith with those employees who have undertaken language achievement or maintenance programs under the existing Program;
- (2) for the immediate and short-term future, at least--to maintain and to increase the momentum of language training;
 - (a) until we get our overall objectives (needs) more firmly stated, and
 - (b) until we have brought our "inventory" up to a "safe" level--that needed to accomplish the Agency's business and that additional competence or reserve we must have on hand to provide flexibility for personnel management and career development and to enable us to meet estimated operational contingencies.

Our long-term objective should be, however, to reduce constantly the scope of monetary incentive awards and to lay primary reliance on personnel planning and operational programing. In this connection, it will be necessary to spell out each step in the abandonment of the awards system as clearly as possible, well in advance of the cut-off date.

e. How can we improve the awards system? Assuming that we do continue to use incentive awards, there seem to be a number of steps which might be taken to make the system more effective and more efficient.

(1) We can insist on a training effort geared primarily to approved objectives (qualification for positions and for contingencies).

(2) At the same time we can make allowance for career development, and one way of doing this could be by encouraging the development of personal proficiency in not one but two languages, generally one world language and one less common language. The individual gains in broader qualification; the Agency gains in more flexible assignment possibilities for each person, thus easing the placement task and allowing for wider rotation.

(3) We can permit the Component (Deputy Directorates or Career Boards) to designate the languages for which they wish to authorize no incentive, or for which they wish to authorize a higher premium in order rapidly to correct a critical deficiency, without requiring changes in the overall Headquarters regulation.

(4) We can create a new award category to put a premium on the actual use of a specified proficiency in certain, specified areas or situations wherein the language proficiency is of special significance--in addition to other basic professional skills--to the accomplishment of the Agency's business.


(5) By so doing, we might--after an announced warning period--restrict achievement awards to achievement accomplished through voluntary training. At the same time, however, we should encourage supervisors to use directed training as the preferred means of meeting the Agency's language needs.

(6) Likewise, after a due warning period, we could drop maintenance awards in all but critical languages in short supply and limited opportunity for use, and such maintenance should be on a two-year basis.

It is emphasized that these suggestions hinge entirely on the concepts of specialized language proficiencies as requisite for certain categories of personnel and prerequisite to assignment to certain positions, and the identification of language objectives in terms of career development and contingency planning. It should be emphasized

that deadlines should be so set as to provide sufficient lead time and avoid excessive use of waivers of requirements which vitiate the requirements system.

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Inspector General's Recommendations concerning Language Training

Recommendation 11: "The DD/P instruct all supervisors to observe, in requesting language training, the principle that training in regular classes is the normal and most effective method, and that resort to tutorial training shall be had only in exceptional cases and where required by security considerations, unavoidable pressure of time, or other valid reason."

action: Approved.

Recommendation 12: "DCI issue instructions that Agency Regulations be amended by adding new provisions (a) directing the Deputy Directors to identify the categories of employees for whom specified degrees of language proficiency are required and to tie these standards of proficiency into promotion practices, and (b) directing the Deputy Directors to identify those positions, or that proportion of positions, in each overseas station that may be filled only by individuals who possess, to the degree specified, the language commonly used in the general area of that station."

Approved, with the modification that standards of language proficiency will not be tied into promotion practices. DD/S to draft amended Agency Regulation.

Recommendation 13: "DCI issue instructions that Agency Regulations be further amended to make language proficiency testing, according to Agency standards, mandatory for all employees who are required to have language skill."

Approved. DD/S to draft amended Agency Regulation.

Recommendation 14: "DD/P direct that in all long-range operational planning the implications with respect to possible radical change in requirements as to the nature or extent of language capabilities be carefully considered and that the conclusions reached be regularly and promptly communicated to the DTR."

Approved.

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Recommendation 15: "DD/P give clearer recognition to the necessity for developing in larger numbers than at the present rate linguistically qualified area specialists."

Approved.

Recommendation 16: "The Deputy Directors take such measures as may be necessary to cause all staff employees under their jurisdiction who claim language competence to submit to the Office of Training tests at the earliest practicable moment."

Approved.

Recommendation 17: "DD/P consider the advisability of placing directly on the division chiefs the responsibility for all scheduling of language training for personnel in the division and for monitoring the timely carrying out of the language training thus scheduled."

Approved, with the understanding that the Clandestine Services Career Service Panel have a secondary responsibility for scheduling and monitoring language training which transcends the requirements of a single division or for an employee who seeks language training in an area different from his present assignment.

Recommendation 24: "The DD/P establish minimum standards of training and experience for case officer apprenticeship including general preparatory, basic skills, language and advanced operational training, and that he determine the feasibility by experiment of some form of overseas familiarization as a part of the apprentice period."

Approved, on the understanding that overseas familiarization as a part of the apprentice period will be primarily on-the-job training.